

Bayfield School District

21st Century Community Learning Center Proposal

Project Title: THE LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT:

Learning is a Community Affair

Bayfield Public Schools

Project Proposal: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

THE LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT: Learning is a Community Affair

The Bayfield School District, established in 1896, is a public school district located in extreme northern Wisconsin with a total K-12 enrollment of 518 students. We operate elementary, middle and high schools at a K-12 facility in the city of Bayfield and an elementary school at LaPointe, separated from the mainland by the waters of Lake Superior. Bayfield is a remote district, with a geographic area of over 250 square miles, giving us a ratio of only two students per square mile. The district serves families in the city of Bayfield and four rural townships, which encompass the Red Cliff Indian Reservation and Madeline Island. Our community has very high poverty rates with 65% of our students eligible for free or reduced-price meals during the 97/98 school term. Bayfield School students and staff compose a multicultural community of learners with 63% of students being Native American.

Too high a percentage of Bayfield students in grades four to nine fall more than one year behind grade level in basic academic skills. Data analysis indicates that the decline in achievement skill levels begins at about grade four and accelerates through grade seven with some continuing breakdown in absence from school, failing grades, conduct rule infractions and students dropping out of school are the result. Risk factors for children and adolescents in the Bayfield community are many including: cultural and personal isolation, alcohol and other drug use as a community norm, and a high percentage of single parent families.

These risk factors create a variety of needs among community members. An active response is called for to meet these needs of youth and adults alike. Proposed 21st Century Center elements of integrated education, health, social service, recreational and cultural programs, literacy education, expanded library service hours, telecommunications and technology education for individuals of all ages, and parenting skills education programs will help move Bayfield forward. This project will place special emphasis on meeting the needs of early and late adolescents. 21st Century Center resources will provide much needed help to create a new, self sustaining set of understandings and skills for an improvement of the quality of life of all the community's citizenry.

The proposed program has two major goals: first, to advance the academic and educational skill and attainment of all participants; and, second, to connect skill competence developed through education to vocations and the world of productive work. To accomplish these goals the project plans to use the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, The Wisconsin Resilient Learner Model of Comprehensive Services, the Iowa Safe Communities Project materials and the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory "Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education".

•NEED FOR PROJECT•

1) APPLICANT / ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The Bayfield School District, established in 1896, is a public school district located in extreme northern Wisconsin with a total K-12 enrollment of 518 students. We operate elementary, middle, and high schools at a K-12 facility in the city of Bayfield and an elementary school at LaPointe, separated from the mainland by the waters of Lake Superior. Bayfield is a remote district, with a geographic area of over 250 square miles, giving us a ratio of only two students per square mile. The district serves families in the city of Bayfield and four rural townships, which encompass the Red Cliff Indian Reservation and Madeline Island. Our community has very high poverty rates with 65% of our students eligible for free or reduced-price meals during the 97/98 school term. Bayfield School students and staff compose a multicultural community of learners, with 63% of students being Native American.

Given the isolated nature of our district, and the fact that we operate two elementary schools, one of which is located on an island, our per-pupil costs rank high among state of Wisconsin public school districts. Notwithstanding our relatively high per-pupil costs, Bayfield is a "property poor" district with a significant portion of the school district area composed of US managed lands (Apostle Islands National Lakeshore and the Red Cliff Indian Reservation). Thus, we have a high property tax-rate to support our necessarily high per-pupil expenditures.

2). RISK FACTORS / NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY

Risk factors for children and adolescents in the Bayfield school community include:

Cultural and personal isolation

Alcohol and other drug use as a community norm

Teen pregnancy

High percentage of single parent families

Physical and emotional abuse

Poor nutrition

Insufficient access to information resources

Lack of law enforcement availability

Lack of parenting skills

Lack of access to quality, supervised, recreational opportunities

Unavailability of transportation

Severity of climate

These issues have been identified through formal survey of students, school staff, tribal members, county service providers and local businesses in 1995 and through the community based process of developing the school district strategic plan. These factors affect children, adolescents and adults in a variety of forms. Children and adolescents suffer victimization by peers, exposure to illegal drug use and alcohol, excess absence from school, marginal health, diminished academic achievement and ambivalence about their hopes for the future. Adults experience severe stress from economic issues, poor health and difficulty in providing for the needs of their families. Educational attainment of the children suffers. Longitudinal analysis of student group achievement test scores, report card grades, scores on third grade reading tests, review of weekly academic deficiency lists, student attendance lists, along with Title I achievement test scores and enrollments and numerous interviews with children individually and in small groups point to serious risk for healthy personal development and academic attainment.

Too high a percentage of Bayfield students in grades four to nine fall more

than one year behind grade level in basic academic skills. Data analysis of grades one through nine indicates that the decline in achievement levels and grades begins at about grade four and accelerates through grade seven with some continuing breakdown in student skill and achievement occurring through grade nine. Excess student absence from school is an associated occurrence with other problems including failing grades. Further, study of Bayfield high school students who become seriously credit deficient in high school indicates that the pattern of academic skill deficit and subsequent credit deficiency are linked to dropping out of school. The pattern is particularly clear in examination of ninth grade credit standings. Students who finish high school freshman year with three or fewer credits are at very high risk to become drop outs from school.

3) PROJECT RESPONSE TO STUDENT AND COMMUNITY NEEDS

PROPOSED PROJECT ELEMENTS

The following components constitute this project:

- Integrated education, health, social service, recreational and cultural programs

- Literacy Education Programs

- Expanded library service hours to serve community needs

- Nutrition and health programs

- Telecommunications and technology education programs for individuals of all ages

- Parenting skills education programs

- Summer and weekend school programs in conjunction with recreation programs

- Services for individuals with disabilities

- Services for individuals who leave school before graduating from secondary school, regardless of the age of such individual

All of these project elements will be available at each of the two proposed Community Learning Centers, the school facilities at Bayfield and at LaPointe on Madeline Island. The entire program will be available to one hundred percent of the students and family members of the Bayfield Public School District including children who are enrolled at the Holy Family Parochial School and those children who participate in a “home school”.

The program has two major goals: to advance the academic and educational skill and attainment of all participants; and to connect skill competence developed through education to vocations and the world of productive work. This will be accomplished within a safe, drug and violence free atmosphere where children and adults can explore their potentials and learn specific ways these potentials connect to lifelong education and the workplace.

Program elements provide the opportunity for each student and family to develop within themselves new resources enhancing personal resilience and, thereby, success in meeting the challenges they each face daily. Each program element, then, is chosen and is important to accomplishing the project goals by diminishing a specific risk factor(s) through meeting an associated need.

4) STATUS OF PRESENT PROGRAMS

A) Current Offerings

The Bayfield School District maintains a number of program initiatives which focus on promoting the health and safe of students. The district integrates Human Growth and Development education into the curriculum of kindergarten through grade twelve. The sequence of instruction includes nine elements with safety, drugs and alcohol and healthy living each in a

specific component of the curriculum at each grade level. The curriculum is written and school board approved and is taught in every classroom at the school. These efforts are reinforced with mandated health classes taught to all grade seven and ten students and several lyceum presentations during the year by special events presenters. The Bayfield School District has actively organized and implemented a variety of AODA education program elements following the State of Wisconsin model for comprehensive programs and U.S. Drug Free Schools guidelines. Conflict resolution skills are taught in a nine week sequence to all students in grades kindergarten through eight as part of the developmental guidance curriculum. Students are taught "Peace Education" at the kindergarten to grade eight levels in a regular, systematic and recurring fashion. American Indian history and culture are taught in all grades at the Bayfield school focusing upon traditional values of respect for other persons, honorable living and community faithfulness.

The schools have teacher aides at the elementary grades and two part time tutors at the high school level. The role of these personnel is to help students improve their academic skill. The school district employs a full time home/school coordinator and the Red Cliff tribe funds an academic resource coordinator for grades nine to twelve. The school provides a full range of Exceptional Education resources for students with disabilities through employment of needed special educators and support services specialists. These services are coordinated in the schools by two Pupil Services Teams, one for students in the elementary and middle schools and one for the high school grades. While these resources are effective and beneficial, there is a profound contrast between the support children have at school during the instructional day and the picture that greets them after

the last bell rings.

B) SHORTCOMINGS AND GAPS

In listening to students, they identify the hours immediately after school, the 3:30 to 5:30 PM period, as the time of the day when they often have no help with learning, organized recreation opportunities are limited or nonexistent and they are at the “mercy” of older neighborhood children and young adults. There is little or no opportunity for children to approach or access community based social services or health care resources. There is no regular coordination and integration of these services with education so that stable, timely access is available to the resources that each agency possesses to maximize benefits of the client. There is no regular parent skill development teaching being provided by any agency within the school district nor in adjacent communities of Washburn or Ashland. There is no systematic nutrition education available to young families in this entire area. There currently is no organized remedial learning, homework completion or academic skill building opportunity available to every child in the district. There is a small after school program for selected fourth through ninth grade students but it meets only three days each week and has had to reject numerous student applicants who wished to participate owing to the program’s very limited financial resources. Another severe gap in community support is transportation for students which is nonexistent beyond what parents may be able to provide. This lack of transport service particularly effects elementary and middle school students who must depend on the school bus at 3:20 to get home. There is no alternative. This is a critical element because the rural dispersion of families in the district currently makes children absolutely dependent upon adult help to see friends, stay after school, visit a public library, play a game of football,

or get involved in a community drama presentation.

Services for young adults and parents to diminish the burdens of lack of educational opportunity, lack of jobs and costs related to travel are very thinly spread. The nearest vocational college is a 65 mile round trip from Bayfield, the nearest Wisconsin Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Office with services for the disabled is a 160 mile round trip to Superior. Job information and counseling are not available in this community outside of the school counseling services, limited public library materials and occasional itinerant consulting services. This makes the use of information technology of paramount importance to the members of this community. It is imperative that people of all ages have the opportunity to learn about and access modern, computer based information resources for personal, educational and economic gain. The Bayfield School District has made a start with this process by making its modest number of computers available for adult education classes taught by knowledgeable business resource persons in the evening, but much more needs to be offered and accomplished. A recent written survey of Bayfield parents with children enrolled at school revealed that eighty-two percent would have their children participate in an after school program consisting of educational and avocational elements with most indicating it should last until 5:30 PM.

•21ST CENTURY PROGRAM OUTLINE•

1. STAFFING AND FACILITIES - Project Director, full time; twelve tutors/activity leaders, part time; and three public library based tutors, part time. Once every week a member of the staff from local Health offices, Social Services, Red Cliff Drug and Alcohol Treatment Center, Bayfield County 4H,

and Bayfield County Youth Court will visit at the school and be available to staff, students and parents for consultation and occasional special presentations. They will assist with activities of the Centers as possible. The district currently has a facility use policy in place which states the rules and regulations applicable to building use and supervision guidelines.

2. ACTIVITIES -

A. Recreation: All students who choose to stay after school will participate in a twenty-five minute recreation period immediately after classes. This will consist of various skill games which focus upon group interaction and cooperative effort to master a challenge task. These activities will be led by tutor/activity leaders, take place in school or on adjacent playgrounds and be planned in advance. These will be aimed at fostering an appreciation of teamwork, mutual effort and expanding the childrens' physical skills.

B. Snack: There will be ten minutes following recreation for a daily snack consisting of a healthy item and include milk or fruit juice.

C. Academics:

1). Approximately 45 students in grades four through eight will make a commitment to attend on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday of each school week. Student and their parent will sign an agreement pledging the child to participate for a full semester. The focus of their activities will be upon enhancing their learning skills using the University of Kansas Learning Strategies. The content of their learning will be academic skill materials from their grade levels. These students will be selected and recruited based on at-risk factors of below grade achievement, lack of regular school work completion, and low performance grades. These students will work in groups of seven students and meet with the same tutor for the semester.

2). Four tutor/activity leaders will be present five afternoons a

week to assist students who signed up for a particular activity with homework completion before the “special event” to help students progress with particular school assignments. (Estimate 35 - 55 student participants)

D. Avocations: A list of activity opportunities will be posted two weeks in advance which students may sign up for and participate in as they become available. This set of activities will be built from a student survey of interests. They may include activities such as art, drama, puppet making, kayak use, swimming instruction, chess, creative writing, video tape creation, autobiographies, Great Books studies, and cultural studies like “myths and legends”, etc. Another set of activities will be selected by leadership and include such offerings as cooking and healthy eating, conflict resolution skills, health topics of interest to children, drug and alcohol information, and healthy lifestyles issues. Another set of activities will be continuously available surrounding learning how to use the computer and the internet as a resource for learning. Tutors will guide student participation in these events. On occasion, resource people from the community will be involved when special knowledge, experience or skills are called for to successfully involve children.

E. Adult Literacy And Services for Individuals Not Graduated: EvenStart personnel will organize programs for adults that focus upon GED completion, reading improvement, and family literacy skills. Extension courses will be offered locally at the Bayfield Community Learning Centers through cooperation with the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. Maximum use possible will be made of the NWCES Network which has distance learning studios at the Bayfield School, Indianhead Technical College and University of Wisconsin-Superior enabling two way interactive instruction. Also, an added part time staff person will be at each of the three public libraries in the school district to assist adults with finding educational resources and assist with job

preparation and search materials including the use of the computer and the world wide web. This will be reinforced by the CESA #12 resource staff from the Northwest Career Information Center through staff training and direct service.

F. Parent Skills Education: A continuous parent support activity will be established at the schools to provide information resources to parents on various topics concerning child raising issues. Discussion groups will be scheduled in advance on a variety of topics of interest to moms and dads, grandparents, aunts and uncles.

G. Transportation: Students will be taken home each evening leaving school at approximately 5:30 PM. Another opportunity to go home will be provided at 6:45 so that high school students can take maximum advantage of the school's after school athletics program, do home work after practice at school, and then get home in a safe and timely manner.

H. Summer Session: There will be a two month, five day a week summer program which will provide a safe and fun recreational program with field trips and personal enhancement skill building. This community resource will operate for six hours each weekday and be free to district children. Children visiting the area with parents may sign up for this program daily for a fee. This program component will operate through the district Community Education department.

I. Educational Technology: The 21st Century Community Learning Centers will offer computer education classes on a continuous basis throughout the school year for all citizens. A modest fee will be charged and subsidized through project grant funds so that family finances are not a barrier to class participation. Topics such as basic computer operation, using a browser program to explore the internet, computers and word processing, and the use of the computer for e-mail are examples of the type of courses which

will be offered. There will also be courses on the use of the internet for vocational learning and job finding. The district will also work to significantly enhance the use of the school district's distance learning resources (the NWCES Network) to offer courses relevant to job preparation, parent education, nutrition and other topics of interest to adult learners.

J. Services for Individuals with Disabilities: Health consultation, learning consultation and assistive technology services will be available to all community members who have a need for these resources. Health department partners, Wisconsin Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and school special education resources will all be available to assist individuals with disabilities to further their educations and career aspirations.

•QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES•

1) STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The Bayfield School District student population is approximately sixty-five percent American Indian, most members of the Red Cliff Band of Chippewa. To be responsive to the character of the Indian culture and that of all Bayfield students, this project proposes to utilize the Resilient Learner Model outlined in the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction publication "Wisconsin's Framework for Comprehensive School Health Programs." "The ultimate goal of the framework is to develop and support *healthy, resilient, successful learners* by helping organize programs, services and instruction into an integrated system." Several district personnel have received training in the use of the model. It is the basis for the Pupil Services Team organization that currently operates. It was chosen for this project because of the district's successful experience with it and, also, because it includes provision for strong Family and Community

Connections which are an integral part of the American Indian way of life thereby helping to insure involvement by the largest number of community members possible. “Families are the primary prevention and youth development agents for their children.” This model provides a framework for making the program elements culturally competent and thereby helping to assure equity and participation by all who have a need.

2) SERVICES IMPACT

The Governor’s Council on Model Academic Standards has recently published “Wisconsin’s Model Academic Standards”; expectations for the attainment of every child attending a public school in the state. This was a collaborative effort by parents, businesses, educators and state agency representatives. These standards address language arts, science, math, and social studies. Included within as subtopics are media and technology, physical science and geography. There are specific grade level performance expectations for each of these topics. The Bayfield Schools 21st Century Learning Centers expect to boost and enhance every school age participants likelihood of meeting these educational standards. (Goal #1).

The Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory at Aurora, Colorado has published “Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education. The laboratory identifies standards for Life Skills relative to thinking and reasoning, self regulation and working with others. These standards are drawn from a variety of regional and national organizations, reported by grade level, and stated in clear, performance oriented language. These standards create a bridge connecting academic knowledge and skill to the circumstances and requirements of the workplace. They set specific expectations for successful performance in the workplace. The Bayfield Schools 21st Century Learning Centers expect to

boost and enhance every school age participants likelihood of meeting these educational benchmarks. (Goal #2).

University of Kansas is a leader in development and training in the use of learning strategies to improve student performance. These techniques for learning are validated in published research. “The use of learning strategies by low achievers enables them to perform at levels that are competitive with their normally achieving peers.” The teachers acting as after school tutors in this project will all receive thorough training in the Learning Strategies. This will enable students to master new learning skills which directly affect their performance in daily classes. At-risk learners will have a powerful new tool which can be applied both in and out of school, not just one more review of material they did not master the first three times it was presented to them. They will learn how to learn more successfully. The Bayfield Schools 21st Century Learning Centers expect to boost and enhance every school age participants learning readiness and resourcefulness and *decrease drug use and violence through this Center’s significantly expanded learning opportunities for children and youth.* (Goals #1 and #2)

3) Collaboration

The following agencies and organizations helped in the planning of this project or have agreed to participate:

- Red Cliff Tribe: social services, Indian child welfare, community health services, Family Preservation and Support Project, the First Prevention AODA Center and Red Cliff AODA Prevention and Treatment Center.

- Bayfield County: Social Services Department, 4H Extension Service, County Youth Court, and County Health Department

- Bayfield Business Community: Trek & Trail, Big Water Learning Center, Bayfield Chamber of Commerce

•Bayfield School: Title I, Special Education, Community Education, Summer School Program, the Kayak Club

•Cooperative Educational Service Agency #12: (Intermediate School District) Center for Instruction and Evaluation, Center for Careers, Center for Technology

•QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN•

1) Staffing and Leadership Support

The personnel available to operate this program is key to its quality. It seems essential that with a new enterprise of this type, having adequate time for planning, selection and training of staff, and collaboration with community partners is paramount. A patchwork of staff assigned extra duties will not work. It is planned that one full time person will direct the two proposed Learning Centers. The intent is to try and assure integrity in the management process of this project from the very beginning. The Project Director will be hired by the Bayfield School District and will be supported by a Management Council composed of designated representatives from each cooperating agency in the community. The function of this group is to guide implementation, provide continuous coordination and review of ongoing evaluation of the programs as the Learning Centers come into operation and move forward with their programs. This council has already operated for two years and is involved with community wide planning and human resource services coordination. The membership includes tribal officials, county agency representatives, school and intermediate district staff and several elected officials including the mayor of Bayfield. Further, the project will operate along clear guidelines concerning non-discrimination in hiring and all other aspects of program development and operation. Adherence to these guidelines

and the use of procedures to assure their incorporation into decision making will produce equity and full participation by the entire range of students and parents in need. Of particular importance is the use of public informational meetings in community sites to give all interested parties an opportunity to become knowledgeable about program planning, possible employment opportunities and to develop an awareness about program services. Television coverage of Management Council meetings on the local cable service's public service coverage is being examined to help reach a wider audience in the community.

2) Assuring Diversity and a Community Voice

This project proposes to use a new activity as a major piece of the strategy to gain input and feedback from various individuals and organizations which have a stake in the community and the success of its members. *FAMILY COMMUNITY SUPPERS* will be held three times a year to celebrate accomplishments of the young people in the Bayfield area and promote community discussion on a topical issue. The meals will be free to all who wish to attend. The Suppers parallel a long established American Indian tradition of gathering for a "feast", a way to celebrate, to discuss, to share, to evaluate and to join together. This activity holds great promise for the meeting the needs of this project and for building a consensus and involvement on the part of a wide range of community members. The Suppers will supplement the regular input and guidance available through monthly Management Council meetings. This group has agreed to be the ongoing oversight mechanism for the project.

The Management council has a very broad membership including a number of tribal government representatives and students are also involved via Red Cliff Junior Tribal Council representatives. Specific process and

procedures planned for assuring community opinion is reflected in the Learning Center operations are contained in the Iowa Safe Communities Program which will be adapted to our setting. The Safe Communities Program was designed to provide an integrated assessment, planning and programming concerning the issue of alcohol and drug abuse. Developed in part through a federal Community Activity Block Grant, Project SAFE “is to facilitate the education and involvement of every sector of communities so that community systems can take responsibility for reducing the incidence of alcohol and other drug use/abuse and associated problems. In the process, important steps will be taken that build healthy communities.” The project outlines an organizational design quite similar to the Resilient Learner model adopted for the Learning Centers. Project SAFE is seen as a very effective tool to use in final project planning and helping to determine ongoing program activities. It is the structure through which the Family and Community Connections portion of the Resilient Learner model will be implemented.

•PROJECT EVALUATION•

Evaluation of the project will involve assessing the two main facets of the Learning Centers’ programs; student attainment and satisfaction of parent/community objectives. First, the program’s impact on student performance will be assessed through the examination of portfolio contents of the participating students. Portfolio assessment is selected because it has proven quite valuable since it involves the students in establishing goals and objectives for themselves and crinkling their progress toward those goals. The importance to a person of establishing goals for achievement is widely appreciated in both educational and business settings. This requires more

work than more customary models of testing to determine attainment, but has the advantages of actively involving the learner and is a skill which can be applied by the student to a variety of life situations. That is not to say that some more conventional measures of student progress will be ignored. Such data as attendance, meeting deadlines, grades in daily class assignments, or test scores will not be ignored. These data will be incorporated into the portfolio as relatively objective measures which students and Learning Center leaders can include in the portfolio as measures whereby students can gauge their progress toward attaining stated goals and objectives which they have selected. A second benefit of this strategy for evaluation is that it prepares students for a kind of self analysis and information gathering that is particularly suited to career orientation and preparation of a resume for employment in the future. A third benefit of portfolios is that their use is very responsive to the relatively individualized nature of the proposed after school program which will reflect a rather high degree of diversity in activities and degrees of involvement by various participants. The school district has some experience with this method of evaluation and is moving toward adopting this strategy on a whole school basis. The district's use of portfolios for students is facilitated at Bayfield by the University of Wisconsin-Stout through their Project Talent Program and the Cooperative Educational Service Area #12 (CESA #12) through its Northwest Regional Career Center. Periodic review of these portfolios will be completed by students with their tutors so that summary descriptive data are available to gauge progress of both individual students and to guide program development.

Satisfaction of parent/community objectives will also be assessed through the use of portfolios. Each tutor, each community partner representative and each volunteer will manage their own portfolio as a tool with which to gauge

attainment of program goals and agency objectives and guide ongoing service delivery to the program, its students and families. It is planned that leadership portfolios will use computer and other technology to expedite recording of data and summarizing that information for use by the Learning Centers Director, school officials and the participating agencies. This is possible because the community currently has a modest computer network with workstations free to all citizens located at public libraries and educational centers in Red Cliff, Madeline Island, and Bayfield. The district offers basic computer training to all members of the community at all three locations. This project will significantly enhance this investment. It is expected that the computer network, through its connection to the internet's world wide web, will become an additional avenue by which all community members can monitor the progress of the project and provide comment about the program's impact upon the community. Creation and maintenance of web pages for information and feedback is a goal for students who are eager to have a meaningful project through which to hone their emerging computer literacy.

This strategy calls for all members of the project to be involved with evaluation; leadership and participants alike. It will provide role modeling by adults as they complete their portfolios which students can imitate. The process will give the student and parent participants an important measure of control over their involvement and its outcomes. Each person will have a tangible product that they have created in the process of learning. This process will also provide the data needed by leadership to assess the ongoing success of various project elements and adjust those as the program matures.